



4000-01-U

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Applications for New Awards; Lead of a Career and Technical
Education (CTE) Network: Research Networks Focused on
Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Program

AGENCY: Institute of Education Sciences, Department of
Education.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Education is issuing a notice
inviting applications for a new award for fiscal year (FY)
2018 to fund the Lead of a Career and Technical Education
(CTE) Network under the Research Networks Focused on
Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Program,
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number
84.305N.

DATES:

Request for Applications Available: January 22, 2018.

Applications Available: February 15, 2018.

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: February 15, 2018.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 5, 2018.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Corinne Alfeld,
Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of
Education, Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th Street, SW.,
Washington, DC 20202 or by email: Corinne.Alfeld@ed.gov.

If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) or a text telephone (TTY), call the Federal Relay Service (FRS), toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Full Text of Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Purpose of Program: The Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Program is designed to direct resources and attention to education problems or issues that are a high priority for the Nation, and to create a structure and process for researchers who are working on these issues to share ideas, build new knowledge, and strengthen their research and dissemination capacity. Under this announcement, the Institute of Education Sciences (Institute) intends to award one grant under this program to fund the Lead of a CTE Network, which is to carry out the requirements under section 114(d)(4) of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to establish a national research center to carry out scientifically based research on career and technical education programs. The CTE Network will conduct research on CTE through projects funded by other Institute grant competitions. The goal of the CTE Network is to support and expand the causal research base on CTE at the secondary

and/or postsecondary level specifically through research on whether and how CTE practices, programs, and policies affect student education outcomes. The Network Lead will be responsible for: (1) CTE Network administration and coordination, including convening meetings and coordinating supplemental research activities among Network members; (2) conducting research activities including an evaluability assessment of CTE programs and a final synthesis of the CTE Network's major findings and lessons; (3) providing research training to increase the capacity of the field and to create a pipeline of new CTE researchers; and (4) developing and hosting a CTE Network website and conducting other leadership and dissemination activities to share the findings and products of the CTE Network with policymakers, practitioners, and other researchers.

Program Authority: 20 U.S.C. 2324(d)(4); 20 U.S.C. 9501 et seq.

Applicable Regulations: (a) The Education Department General Administrative Regulations in 34 CFR parts 77, 81, 82, 84, 86, 97, 98, and 99. In addition, the regulations in 34 CFR part 75 are applicable, except for the provisions in 34 CFR 75.100, 75.101(b), 75.102, 75.103, 75.105, 75.109(a), 75.200, 75.201, 75.209, 75.210, 75.211, 75.217(a)-(c), 75.219, 75.220, 75.221, 75.222, and 75.230.

(b) The Office of Management and Budget Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485. (c) The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended in 2 CFR part 3474.

Note: The regulations in 34 CFR part 86 apply to institutions of higher education only.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative agreement.

Estimated Number of Awards: 1.

Maximum Award: The maximum total award is \$5 million for the entire project period of 60 months.

Note: The Department is not bound by any estimates in this notice.

Project Period: 60 months.

III. Eligibility Information

1. Eligible Applicants: Eligible applicants are institutions of higher education, public and private non-profit organizations and agencies, and consortia of such institutions, organizations, or agencies that have the ability and capacity to conduct scientifically valid research.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching: This program does not require cost sharing or matching.

IV. Application and Submission Information

1. Request for Applications and Other Information:

Information regarding program and application requirements for this competition will be contained in the Request for Applications (RFA), which will be available on or before January 22, 2018, on the Institute's website at:

<http://ies.ed.gov/funding/>. The application package for this competition will be available on February 15, 2018, on the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov.

Individuals with disabilities can obtain a copy of the application package in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) by contacting the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Requirements concerning the content of an application are contained in the RFA. The forms that must be submitted will be in the application package for this competition.

3. Submission Dates and Times:

Request for Applications Available: January 22, 2018.

Applications Available: February 15, 2018.

Deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply: February 15, 2018.

Deadline for Transmittal of Applications: April 5, 2018.

We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements.

The application package for this competition must be submitted electronically using the Grants.gov Apply site (www.Grants.gov). For information about how to submit your application package electronically, or in paper format by mail or hand delivery if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, please refer to the Other Submission Requirements section below.

Individuals with disabilities who need an accommodation or auxiliary aid in connection with the application process should contact the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT. If the Department provides an accommodation or auxiliary aid to an individual with a disability in connection with the application process, the individual's application remains subject to all other requirements and limitations in this notice.

4. Intergovernmental Review: This competition is not subject to Executive Order 12372 and the regulations in CFR part 79.

5. Funding Restrictions: We reference regulations outlining funding restrictions in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

6. Data Universal Numbering System Number, Taxpayer Identification Number, and System for Award Management: To

do business with the Department of Education, you must--

- a. Have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and a Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN);
- b. Register both your DUNS number and TIN with the System for Award Management (SAM), the Government's primary registrant database;
- c. Provide your DUNS number and TIN on your application; and
- d. Maintain an active SAM registration with current information while your application is under review by the Department and, if you are awarded a grant, during the project period.

You can obtain a DUNS number from Dun and Bradstreet at the following website: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. A DUNS number can be created within one to two business days.

If you are a corporate entity, agency, institution, or organization, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service. If you are an individual, you can obtain a TIN from the Internal Revenue Service or the Social Security Administration. If you need a new TIN, please allow two to five weeks for your TIN to become active.

The SAM registration process can take approximately seven business days, but may take upwards of several weeks, depending on the completeness and accuracy of the data you enter into the SAM database. Thus, if you think you might want to apply for Federal financial assistance under a program administered by the Department, please allow sufficient time to obtain and register your DUNS number and TIN. We strongly recommend that you register early.

Note: Once your SAM registration is active, it may be 24 to 48 hours before you can access the information in, and submit an application through, Grants.gov.

If you are currently registered with SAM, you may not need to make any changes. However, please make certain that the TIN associated with your DUNS number is correct. Also, note that you will need to update your registration annually. This may take three or more business days.

Information about SAM is available at www.SAM.gov. To further assist you with obtaining and registering your DUNS number and TIN in SAM or updating your existing SAM account, we have prepared a SAM.gov Tip Sheet, which you can find at: www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/sam-faqs.html.

In addition, if you are submitting your application via Grants.gov, you must (1) be designated by your organization as an Authorized Organization Representative

(AOR); and (2) register yourself with Grants.gov as an AOR. Details on these steps are outlined at the following Grants.gov web page:
www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html.

7. Other Submission Requirements: Applications for grants under this competition must be submitted electronically unless you qualify for an exception to this requirement in accordance with the instructions in this section.

a. Electronic Submission of Applications.

Applications for grants under the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice Program, CFDA number 84.305N, must be submitted electronically using the Governmentwide Grants.gov Apply site at www.Grants.gov. You may not email an electronic copy of a grant application to us.

A Grants.gov applicant must apply online using Workspace, a shared environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. An applicant can create an individual Workspace for each application notice and, thus, establish for that application a collaborative application package that allows more than one person in the applicant's organization to work concurrently on an application. The

applicant can, thus, assign other users to participate in the Workspace. The system also enables the applicant to reuse forms from previous submissions; check them in and out and complete them; and submit its application package. For access to complete instructions on how to apply, refer to: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

Effective January 1, 2018, applicants may not download an Adobe form application package from Grants.gov. Applicants must instead use Workspace.

We will reject your application if you submit it in paper format unless, as described elsewhere in this section, you qualify for one of the exceptions to the electronic submission requirement and submit, no later than two weeks before the application deadline date, a written statement to the Department that you qualify for one of these exceptions. Further information regarding calculation of the date that is two weeks before the application deadline date is provided later in this section under Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement.

You may access the electronic grant application for the Research Networks Focused on Critical Problems of Education Policy and Practice competition at www.Grants.gov. You must search for the downloadable

application package for this competition by the CFDA number. Do not include the CFDA number's alpha suffix in your search (e.g., search for 84.305, not 84.305N).

Please note the following:

- When you enter the Grants.gov site, you will find information about submitting an application electronically through the site, as well as the hours of operation.

- Applications received by Grants.gov are date and time stamped. Your application must be fully uploaded and submitted and must be date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system no later than 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. Except as otherwise noted in this section, we will not accept your application if it is received--that is, date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system--after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We do not consider an application that does not comply with the deadline requirements. When we retrieve your application from Grants.gov, we will notify you if we are rejecting your application because it was date and time stamped by the Grants.gov system after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date.

- The amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors,

including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you do not wait until the application deadline date to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

- You should review and follow the Education Submission Procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov that are included in the application package for the competition to ensure that you submit your application in a timely manner to the Grants.gov system. You can also find the Education Submission Procedures pertaining to Grants.gov under News and Events on the Department's G5 system home page at www.G5.gov. In addition, for specific guidance and procedures for submitting an application through Grants.gov, please refer to the Grants.gov website at: www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html.

- You will not receive additional point value because you submit your application in electronic format, nor will we penalize you if you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, as described elsewhere in this section, and submit your application in paper format.

- You must submit all documents electronically, including all information you typically provide on the

following forms: the Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424), the Department of Education Supplemental Information for SF 424, Budget Information--Non-Construction Programs (ED 524), and all necessary assurances and certifications.

- You must upload any narrative sections and all other attachments to your application as files in a read-only, flattened Portable Document Format (PDF), meaning any fillable PDF documents must be saved as flattened non-fillable files. Therefore, do not upload an interactive or fillable PDF file. If you upload a file type other than a read-only, flattened PDF (e.g., Word, Excel, WordPerfect, etc.) or submit a password-protected file, we will not review that material. Please note that this could result in your application not being considered for funding because the material in question--for example, the project narrative--is critical to a meaningful review of your proposal. For that reason it is important to allow yourself adequate time to upload all material as PDF files. The Department will not convert material from other formats to PDF. There is no need to password protect a file in order to meet the requirement to submit a read-only flattened PDF. And, as noted, the Department will not review password-protected files.

- After you electronically submit your application, you will receive from Grants.gov an automatic notification of receipt that contains a Grants.gov tracking number. (This notification indicates receipt by Grants.gov only, not receipt by the Department.) Grants.gov will also notify you automatically by email if your application met all the Grants.gov validation requirements or if there were any errors (such as submission of your application by someone other than a registered Authorized Organization Representative, or inclusion of an attachment with a file name that contains special characters). You will be given an opportunity to correct any errors and resubmit, but you must still meet the deadline for submission of applications.

Once your application is successfully validated by Grants.gov, the Department will retrieve your application from Grants.gov and send you an email with a unique PR/Award number for your application.

These emails do not mean that your application is without any disqualifying errors. While your application may have been successfully validated by Grants.gov, it must also meet the Department's application requirements as specified in this notice and in the application instructions. Disqualifying errors could include, for

instance, failure to upload attachments in a read-only, flattened PDF; failure to submit a required part of the application; or failure to meet applicant eligibility requirements. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submitted application has met all of the Department's requirements.

- We may request that you provide us original signatures on forms at a later date.

Application Deadline Date Extension in Case of Technical Issues with the Grants.gov System: If you are experiencing problems submitting your application through Grants.gov, please contact the Grants.gov Support Desk, toll free, at 1-800-518-4726. You must obtain a Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number and must keep a record of it.

If you are prevented from electronically submitting your application on the application deadline date because of technical problems with the Grants.gov system, we will grant you an extension until 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, the following business day to enable you to transmit your application electronically or by hand delivery. You also may mail your application by following the mailing instructions described elsewhere in this notice.

If you submit an application after 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date,

please contact the person listed under FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT and provide an explanation of the technical problem you experienced with Grants.gov, along with the Grants.gov Support Desk Case Number. We will accept your application if we can confirm that a technical problem occurred with the Grants.gov system and that the problem affected your ability to submit your application by 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, on the application deadline date. We will contact you after we determine whether your application will be accepted.

Note: The extensions to which we refer in this section apply only to the unavailability of, or technical problems with, the Grants.gov system. We will not grant an extension if you failed to fully register to submit your application to Grants.gov before the application deadline date and time or if the technical problem you experienced is unrelated to the Grants.gov system.

Exception to Electronic Submission Requirement: You qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, and may submit your application in paper format, if you are unable to submit an application through the Grants.gov system because--

- You do not have access to the internet; or

- You do not have the capacity to upload large documents to the Grants.gov system;

and

- No later than two weeks before the application deadline date (14 calendar days or, if the fourteenth calendar day before the application deadline date falls on a Federal holiday, the next business day following the Federal holiday), you mail or fax a written statement to the Department, explaining which of the two grounds for an exception prevents you from using the internet to submit your application.

If you mail your written statement to the Department, it must be postmarked no later than two weeks before the application deadline date. If you fax your written statement to the Department, we must receive the faxed statement no later than two weeks before the application deadline date.

Address and mail or fax your statement to: Ellie Pelaez, U.S. Department of Education, 550 12th Street, SW., Potomac Center Plaza, Room 4107, Washington, DC 20202.
Fax: 202-245-6752.

If you use a TDD or a TTY, call the FRS, toll free, at 1-800-877-8339.

Your paper application must be submitted in accordance with the mail or hand delivery instructions described in this notice.

b. Submission of Paper Applications by Mail.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you may mail (through the U.S. Postal Service or a commercial carrier) your application to the Department. You must mail the original and two copies of your application, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number: 84.305N)
LBJ Basement Level 1
400 Maryland Avenue, SW.
Washington, DC 20202-4260

You must show proof of mailing consisting of one of the following:

- (1) A legibly dated U.S. Postal Service postmark.
- (2) A legible mail receipt with the date of mailing stamped by the U.S. Postal Service.
- (3) A dated shipping label, invoice, or receipt from a commercial carrier.
- (4) Any other proof of mailing acceptable to the Institute.

If you mail your application through the U.S. Postal Service, we do not accept either of the following as proof of mailing:

(1) A private metered postmark.

(2) A mail receipt that is not dated by the U.S. Postal Service.

Note: The U.S. Postal Service does not uniformly provide a dated postmark. Before relying on this method, you should check with your local post office.

We will not consider applications postmarked after the application deadline date.

c. Submission of Paper Applications by Hand Delivery.

If you qualify for an exception to the electronic submission requirement, you (or a courier service) may deliver your paper application to the Department by hand. You must deliver the original and two copies of your application by hand, on or before the application deadline date, to the Department at the following address:

U.S. Department of Education
Application Control Center
Attention: (CFDA Number: 84.305N)
550 12th Street, SW.
Room 7039, Potomac Center Plaza
Washington, DC 20202-4260

The Application Control Center accepts hand deliveries daily between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30:00 p.m., Washington, DC time, except Saturdays, Sundays, and Federal holidays.

Note for Mail or Hand Delivery of Paper Applications: If you mail or hand deliver your application to the Department--

(1) You must indicate on the envelope and--if not provided by the Department--in Item 11 of the SF 424 the CFDA number, including suffix letter, if any, of the competition under which you are submitting your application; and

(2) The Application Control Center will mail to you a notification of receipt of your grant application. If you do not receive this notification within 15 business days from the application deadline date, you should call the U.S. Department of Education Application Control Center at (202) 245-6288.

V. Application Review Information

1. Selection Criteria: For all of its grant competitions, the Institute uses selection criteria based on a peer-review process that has been approved by the National Board for Education Sciences. The Peer Review Procedures for Grant Applications can be found on the Institute's website at

https://ies.ed.gov/director/sro/peer_review/application_review.asp. For this competition, peer reviewers will be asked to evaluate the significance of the application, the quality of the network plan (including network administration, research activities, research training, leadership and dissemination), the qualifications and experience of the personnel, and the resources of the applicant to support the proposed activities. These criteria are described in greater detail in the RFA.

2. Review and Selection Process: We remind potential applicants that in reviewing applications in any discretionary grant competition, the Institute may consider, under 34 CFR 75.217(d)(3), the past performance of the applicant in carrying out a previous award, such as the applicant's use of funds, achievement of project objectives, and compliance with grant conditions. The Institute may also consider whether the applicant failed to submit a timely performance report or submitted a report of unacceptable quality.

In addition, in making a competitive grant award, the Institute also requires various assurances including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal

financial assistance from the Department of Education (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

3. Risk Assessment and Special

Conditions: Consistent with 2 CFR 200.205, before awarding grants under this competition the Department conducts a review of the risks posed by applicants. Under 2 CFR 3474.10, the Institute may impose special conditions and, in appropriate circumstances, high-risk conditions on a grant if the applicant or grantee is not financially stable; has a history of unsatisfactory performance; has a financial or other management system that does not meet the standards in 2 CFR part 200, subpart D; has not fulfilled the conditions of a prior grant; or is otherwise not responsible.

4. Integrity and Performance System: If you are selected under this competition to receive an award that over the course of the project period may exceed the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$150,000), under 2 CFR 200.205(a)(2) we must make a judgment about your integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards--that is, the risk posed by you as an applicant--before we make an award. In doing so, we must consider any information about you that is in the integrity and performance system (currently referred to as the

Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)), accessible through SAM. You may review and comment on any information about yourself that a Federal agency previously entered and that is currently in FAPIIS.

Please note that, if the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from the Federal Government exceeds \$10,000,000, the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, require you to report certain integrity information to FAPIIS semiannually. Please review the requirements in 2 CFR part 200, Appendix XII, if this grant plus all the other Federal funds you receive exceed \$10,000,000.

VI. Award Administration Information

1. Award Notices: If your application is successful, we notify your U.S. Representative and U.S. Senators and send you a Grant Award Notification (GAN); or we may send you an email containing a link to access an electronic version of your GAN. We may notify you informally, also.

If your application is not evaluated or not selected for funding, we notify you.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements: We identify administrative and national policy requirements in the application package and reference these and other

requirements in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice.

We reference the regulations outlining the terms and conditions of an award in the Applicable Regulations section of this notice and include these and other specific conditions in the GAN. The GAN also incorporates your approved application as part of your binding commitments under the grant.

3. Grant Administration: Applicants should budget for an annual two-day meeting for project directors to be held in Washington, DC.

4. Reporting: (a) If you apply for a grant under this competition, you must ensure that you have in place the necessary processes and systems to comply with the reporting requirements in 2 CFR part 170 should you receive funding under the competition. This does not apply if you have an exception under 2 CFR 170.110(b).

(b) At the end of your project period, you must submit a final performance report, including financial information, as directed by the Institute. If you receive a multiyear award, you must submit an annual performance report that provides the most current performance and financial expenditure information as directed by the Institute under 34 CFR 75.118. The Institute may also

require more frequent performance reports under 34 CFR 75.720(c). For specific requirements on reporting, please go to www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html.

5. Performance Measures: To evaluate the overall success of its education research grant programs, the Institute annually assesses the percentage of projects that result in peer-reviewed publications, the number of newly developed or modified interventions with evidence of promise for improving student education outcomes, and the number of Institute-supported interventions with evidence of efficacy in improving student outcomes including student academic outcomes and social and behavioral competencies for school-age students. Student academic outcomes include learning and achievement in core academic content areas (reading, writing, math, and science), and outcomes that reflect students' successful progression through the education system (e.g., course and grade completion; high school graduation; postsecondary enrollment, progress, and completion). Social and behavioral competencies include social and emotional skills, attitudes, and behaviors that are important to student's academic and post-academic success.

6. Continuation Awards: In making a continuation award under 34 CFR 75.253, the Institute considers, among

other things: whether a grantee has made substantial progress in meeting the goals and objectives of the project; whether the grantee has expended funds in a manner that is consistent with its approved application and budget; and, if the Institute has established performance measurement requirements, whether the grantee has met the performance targets in the grantee's approved application.

In making a continuation award, the Institute also considers whether the grantee is operating in compliance with the assurances in its approved application, including those applicable to Federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination in programs or activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department (34 CFR 100.4, 104.5, 106.4, 108.8, and 110.23).

VII. Other Information

Accessible Format: Individuals with disabilities can obtain this document and a copy of the RFA in an accessible format (e.g., braille, large print, audiotape, or compact disc) on request to the appropriate program contact person listed in the chart at the end of this notice.

Electronic Access to This Document: The official version of this document is the document published in the *Federal Register*. Free internet access to the official edition of the *Federal Register* and the Code of Federal Regulations is

available via the Federal Digital System at:
www.gpo.gov/fdsys. At this site you can view this
document, as well as all other documents of this Department
published in the *Federal Register*, in text or PDF. To use
PDF you must have Adobe Acrobat Reader, which is available
free at this site.

You may also access documents of the Department
published in the *Federal Register* by using the article
search feature at: www.federalregister.gov. Specifically,
through the advanced search feature at this site, you can
limit your search to documents published by the Department.
Dated: January 16, 2018.

Thomas Brock,
Commissioner of the National
Center for Education Research,
Delegated the Duties of the
Director of the Institute of
Education Sciences.

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